IN THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (currently amended) A system for automatically classifying a list of telephone numbers into one or more categories, the system comprising:

a processor;

a data storage medium for at least temporarily storing the list of telephone numbers;

means for accessing a telephone network; and

software operative on said processor to:

a) Initiate a first series of calls to telephone numbers from the list of telephone numbers on a line within said telephone network;

b) Play an audible message over said line that requests ~~a specific response from~~ that a callee on said line terminate said call;

c) Identify whether or not said call has been terminated ~~Receive and identify audible sounds relative to said specific response on said line~~ after said audible message is played; and

d) Classify a telephone number as having been live-answered if said call was terminated in response to said audible message or classify a telephone number as not live-answered if said call was not terminated in response to said audible message~~Assign one or more of the categories to each of said telephone numbers according to said audible sounds~~.

Claim 2 (currently amended) The system of claim 1 wherein said software is further operative on said processor to create a data file comprising said telephone

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numbers and the identity of ~~the category assigned to~~ each of said telephone numbers <u>as having been live-answered or not live-answered</u>.

Claim 3 (original) The system of claim 2 wherein said software is further operative on said processor to generate reports based on said data file.

Claim 4 (cancelled)

Claim 5 (cancelled)

Claim 6 (cancelled)

Claim 7 (cancelled)

Claim 8 (previously presented) The system of claim 1 wherein said software is further operative on said processor to identify special information tones on said line after initiating said calls.

Claim 9 (previously presented) The system of claim 8 wherein said software is further operative on said processor to classify said telephone numbers as not live-answered when said special information tones are identified.

Claim 10 (currently amended) The system of claim ~~7~~ <u>2</u> wherein said software is further operative on said processor to initiate a second series of calls to said not live-answered telephone numbers on a line within said telephone network and receive audible sounds on said line.

Claim 11 (currently amended) The system of claim 10 wherein said software is further operative on said processor to <u>receive and identify audible sounds on said line and</u> compare said audible sounds to one or more known audible sounds to sub-classify said not live-answered telephone numbers.

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Claim 12 (original) The system of claim 11 wherein said known audible sounds are comprised of at least portions of spoken messages.

Claim 13 (original) The system of claim 12 wherein said spoken messages are comprised of separate messages advising that a telephone number is disconnected, has been changed, or is privacy blocked.

Claim 14 (original) The system of claim 12 wherein said spoken messages are comprised of separate messages advising that all circuits are busy or that an area code has changed.

Claim 15 (original) The system of claim 12 wherein said spoken messages are comprised of common corporate and answering system greetings.

Claim 16 (original) The system of claim 11 wherein said software is further operative on said processor to identify and classify a telephone number from which audible sounds are received that are not similar to said one or more known audible sounds.

Claim 17 (previously presented) The system of claim 11 wherein said software is further operative on said processor to create a data file comprising said not live-answered telephone numbers and a sub-classification for each of said not live-answered telephone numbers based on said one or more known audible sounds.

Claim 18 (original) The system of claim 17 wherein said software is further operative on said processor to generate reports based on said data file.

Claim 19 (original) The system of claim 1 wherein said software is further operative on said processor to at least temporarily store said audible sounds received over said line on said data storage medium prior to identifying said audible sounds.

Claim 20 (original) The system of claim 19 wherein said software is further operative on said processor to complete said call after receiving and storing said audible sounds but prior to identifying said audible sounds.

Claim 21 (cancelled)

Claim 22 (cancelled)

Claim 23 (previously presented) The system of claim 20 wherein said software is further operative on said processor to classify said telephone numbers as live-answered if said call recipient provides said specific response.

Claim 24 (previously presented) The system of claim 20 wherein said software is further operative on said processor to classify said telephone numbers as not live-answered if said callee does not provide said specific response.

Claim 25 (previously presented) The system of claim 19 wherein said software is further operative on said processor to identify special information tones on said line after initiating said calls.

Claim 26 (previously presented) The system of claim 25 wherein said software is further operative on said processor to classify said telephone numbers as not live-answered when said special information tones are identified.

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Claim 27 (original) The system of claim 24 wherein said software is further operative on said processor to compare said audible sounds to one or more known audible sounds to sub-classify said not live-answered telephone number.

Claim 28 (original) The system of claim 27 wherein said known audible sounds are comprised of at least portions of spoken messages.